

EVERY ITEM
GUARANTEED TO
MAKE YOU WISER
OR MERRIER

New York Tribune

First to Last—For Children—Fun, Facts and Fancies

WEATHER
Fine for red leaves,
Football and Turkey;
Bring up the firewood,
Skies will be murky.



FAR-AWAY FOLKS

Children of the Mountains



BY FRIEDA MEREDITH DIETZ

WHAT a strangely beautiful procession! Rosy cheeked boys and girls, men and women, trooping down a village street, dressed in quaint costumes of bright colors with many flowers—this is Switzerland. We are in one of the many small villages deep in a valley gazing up at mountains on all sides whose peaks are covered with snow but whose sides are green. It is early springtime and the whole village is escorting the herdsmen and milkers to the mountains, which they will gradually ascend as the summer comes, hunting for ever greener, sweeter pastures for their cows, goats and sheep. The animals now have their horns and necks twined with bright red Alpine roses.

Music strikes up from somewhere in the crowd, and the girls begin to sing and the men to yodel. The girls wear brightly colored skirts with stiffly starched white waists and dark velvet bodices. Starched hats of lace are on their heads and silver chains are looped under their arms and fastened to their bodices with bows of ribbon. The men wear heavy knit stockings, many of them short trousers and short jackets over their loose blouses. Those who are off for the summer carry alpenstocks (long poles like our Boy Scouts use, with steel points for climbing).

The merry crowd goes up the mountain path a short way, then pauses. The village pastor asks a blessing and relatives and friends bid each other goodbye for many weeks.

Two little brothers are going up with the herdsmen for the first time. They are very excited, especially when they reach the hut in which they are to live for the summer. It is a small, low, one room dwelling of logs, with big stones on top to hold the roof down. There is very little furniture and they are to sleep on sheepskins. Early in the morning they must arise and milk the cows and goats, then lead them higher on the mountain to the edge of the snow almost, where the tufts of grass are sweetest. Then they return to the hut to set aside the milk of that day and make butter and cheese of the sour milk of a few days before. Their meals are of cheese, milk, butter, bread, fresh or dried fruit, and coffee. In the evening the little boys are taught to blow the long alpenhorn which calls the animals home.

All summer long the days are alike, and when the snow comes further down the mountain they gradually descend until it becomes too cold. They blow their horns and yodel from afar to let the village know they are returning, and the procession is at the foot of the mountain to meet them. Oh, how happy they are! Especially

the little sisters who have stayed at home and helped with the harvest, gathered the fruit and tended the small garden on which the families depend for all of their vegetables. They are eager to know if their brothers have brought them any edelweiss—the rare velvety white flowers which grow in dangerous crevices near the mountain tops. They are eager to grow up so that they may become milkers and go up in the mountains in summer time.

After a day of rejoicing the families settle down to their winter's work. Boys and girls must go to school,



and when they come home the boys are taught to make clocks and watches or to carve wood, and the girls are taught to spin, weave, knit and make laces.

The small Swiss houses are called chalets and are built on foundations of stone with overhanging balconies from the second story. The animals live under the same roof, the stables opening into the kitchens. You may see some farmhouses very like these in the New England states.

America remembers with pride one of her Swiss emigrants. Go to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and in the entrance hall you will see a bust of Agassiz, the famous scientist, born and educated in Switzerland, who taught for many years in Harvard University.